

The Emperors Challenge, for me, is the ultimate cross country running experience. It is an incredible event because it is more than just a footrace. This half marathon is not just about speed and personal best times. As the name suggests, it is a challenge that takes you to the top and then asks you to return to where your journey began.

After completing my first Emperors Challenge race, I was overwhelmed by a sense of pride and success in having hiked up and over beautiful Roman Mountain with my wife. Having watched the runners that year I felt an urge to join them in a quest to not just complete is unique race, but do so in the fastest speed that I could endure. My last four Challenges have indeed been as rewarding as that first ascent, but each experience has its own blend of fun, fitness and struggle. There is no better cross country story than recounting the events of the day on Roman Mountain to others who have yet to Rise to the Challenge. Whether you are enjoying the sun, breaking through the fog or splashing through the wet moss this event will leave you with memories to last a lifetime.

Communities across B.C. and even North America are home to some wonderful races, each of which offer a unique blend of distance and terrain. The Emperors Challenge, however, offers its members more than any race I have been part of. For that day you are a member of the Tumbler Ridge community, its pride, spirit and dedication and love for the outdoors. You travel where very few people have trod. You conquer a Rocky Mountain. You find a way to become one of a growing number of people who can claim they have finished the greatest half marathon in the world!

I encourage and challenge anyone to join me this year at the 2007 Emperors Challenge whether you are a runner or hiker. You do not want to miss the greatest race of 2007 that is right in your own backyard. See you in August.

Trevor Kolkea

